



Date Approved: January 18, 2009, Revised December 16, 2013, Revised September 21, 2015.....

Approved By: Bethel Lutheran Board of Elders

Title: MARRIAGE POLICY

The marriage policy of Bethel Lutheran Church, a member congregation of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, is and always has been consistent with the inerrant Word of God. We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24-25), and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph. 5:32). The official position of The Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod, as set forth in 1998 Res. 3-21 (“To Affirm the Sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions”), is that homosexual unions come under categorical prohibition in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim. 1:9-10) as contrary to the Creator’s design (Rom. 1:26-27). We also believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. The two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person. These positions and beliefs can be found on the LCMS website, along with other statements, papers and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex civil unions and “marriage.” Our pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs, and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

GUIDELINES:

Facility Use: Bethel Lutheran Church permits members, regular attendees and their children to use our facility for weddings rent-free. A regular attendee is defined as attending Sunday worship service and participating in a Bethel small group for over 6 months. All others that wish to use the church will be charged a rental fee as outlined in the Fee Schedule.

Wedding music: It is important to keep in mind that a church wedding is a service of the church and the music you choose for your ceremony should be Christ honoring in every respect. If your ceremony requires the use of our sound system in any way you must use one of our approved sound technicians. All music must be submitted to the pastor for approval two weeks prior to the event.

PowerPoint screens/videotaping: No PowerPoint presentations and/or videotapes may be shown on the sanctuary screens or thru any other projection device. Video taping of the service is allowed and the pastor will give the couples details on this.

Flowers and Decorations: Whenever candles are used they must be the drip less variety and must be set in a candelabrum, which will catch and contain all drippings so that the floor will be

thoroughly protected. The bride and groom will be held responsible for any wax cleaning that needs to be done.

There are to be no tacks, wires, screws, pins, hot wax or gum used on any of the sanctuary furnishings.

If flower petals will be dropped, the use of an aisle runner is mandatory. Protective material must be used under all flower arrangements in order to protect the carpet.

All decorations, flowers, floral stands, plants and other equipment must be removed from the church building immediately following its use. However, if you would like to leave a flower arrangement for the Sunday worship service, check with the Bethel wedding coordinator.

Air conditioning or heat will be turned on only at a reasonable time before any scheduled event. Florists should note this and not bring flowers to the facility prematurely.

All candles, crosses, flags, paraments, baptismal font, communion rail, altar furniture and other worship materials will remain in the altar area. Also, the praise band instruments will be kept in place.

Birdseed and rice: Birdseed, rice, bubbles, balloons, glitter, confetti or any other party material may NOT be thrown/used inside the church building. Birdseed or bubbles may be used outside the building.

Smoking, Food and Alcohol: There is NO smoking or drinking of alcoholic beverages allowed on the Bethel Campus at any time. NO food or drink, except water, can be used in the sanctuary.

Photographer: The photographer must not step from pew to pew when taking photos and must NOT wear shoes while standing on pews. No flash photograph or movement by photographer during the ceremony. Photos of the bridal party will be taken before or after the service.

Wedding Manual: A wedding manual will be provided to the couple upon their request to be married. This manual contains more detailed information on some of the areas outlined above. However, this policy supercedes any possible conflicts between the two documents.

Responsibilities: The individual or family scheduling the wedding will be held liable for any damage to the carpet, furniture or the building and grounds. The church reserves the right to restrict the privileges of any florist, photographer or individual who violates the guidelines outlined. The church will make every reasonable effort to protect personal items brought to the church for use. However, the church cannot do more than this and will not be liable for such items lost, stolen or damaged. Any rooms throughout the building that are used by the bridal party should be returned to their original condition following their use.

Fee Schedule:

Facility use (non-members):	\$600.00
Wedding Coordinator:	\$75.00
Officiating Minister:	\$125.00
Organist:	\$60.00
Sound Technician:	\$60.00
Janitorial Services:	\$60.00

